

Examining the Effect of Principal Leadership and Teachers' Work Ethic on Teacher Performance at SDN 10 Air Kumbang

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis bagaimana etika kerja guru dan kepemimpinan kepala sekolah mempengaruhi kinerja mereka di SDN 10 Air Kumbang. Tujuh guru yang dipilih melalui sampling purposif menjadi sampel penelitian. Kuesioner yang mengevaluasi kepemimpinan, etika kerja, dan karakteristik kinerja guru digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data. Korelasi dianalisis menggunakan analisis regresi linier berganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kinerja guru dipengaruhi secara positif dan signifikan oleh kepemimpinan kepala sekolah. Selain itu, etika kerja guru memiliki dampak yang positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerjanya. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa etika kerja yang kuat dan kepemimpinan yang baik dapat meningkatkan kinerja guru di SDN 10 Air Kumbang. Menurut survei, kepala sekolah sebaiknya terus mengasah kemampuan kepemimpinannya untuk menginspirasi dan meningkatkan kinerja guru, serta menumbuhkan budaya kerja yang disiplin dan bertanggung jawab.

Kata kunci: Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah, Etos Kerja Guru, Kinerja Guru, Analisis Regresi Linier Berganda.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine how teachers' work ethics and the leadership of the school principal affect their performance at SDN 10 Air Kumbang. Seven teachers who were chosen through purposive sampling made up the research sample. Questionnaires evaluating leadership, work ethic, and teacher performance characteristics were used to gather data. The correlations were investigated using multiple linear regression analysis. The findings show that teacher performance is positively and significantly impacted by the leadership of the school principal. Additionally, a teacher's work ethic has a favorable and substantial impact on their performance. These results demonstrate that a strong work ethic and good leadership can improve teacher performance in SDN 10 Air Kumbang. According to the survey, school principals should continue to hone their leadership abilities in order to inspire and elevate teachers, as well as foster a disciplined and responsible work culture.

Keywords: Principal Leadership; Teacher Work Ethic; Teacher Performance; Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher performance plays a pivotal role in determining the quality of education in elementary schools (Restu Rahayu & Sofyan Iskandar, 2023). Previous studies have shown that effective school leadership and a strong work ethic among teachers are critical factors that can significantly enhance teacher performance (Pratama & Yelken, 2024; Ainscow, 2020). School principals who demonstrate transformational leadership, provide guidance, and foster a supportive environment tend to positively influence teacher's motivation and commitment (Davids & Rinqest, 2024). Similarly, teacher's work ethic, reflected in their diligence, responsibility, and professionalism, has been linked to better teaching outcomes and student achievement (Alves et al., 2020). Despite the known importance of leadership

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and work ethic, limited research has simultaneously examined their combined influence on teacher performance in the context of public elementary schools in Indonesia, particularly in Sembawa District (Miller et al., 2021). Most prior studies have focused on either leadership or work ethic individually, leaving a gap in understanding how these factors interact to impact performance (Cortázar et al., 2021). Moreover, existing studies often rely on theoretical models without robust empirical verification in local educational settings (AlAli & Wardat, 2024).

The state of the art indicates that while leadership theories and work ethic frameworks are well-established globally, their practical applications in improving teacher performance in Indonesian elementary schools remain underexplored (Zeng et al., 2025). There is a need for empirical studies that integrate both variables to provide a comprehensive understanding of their contribution to educational outcomes (Kustyarini & Umamy, 2024). This study's novelty lies in examining the simultaneous effects of school principal's leadership and teacher's work ethic on teacher performance, providing new evidence from SDN 10 Air Kumbang. By analyzing these variables together, this research aims to offer practical insights for school management and policy development, helping principals foster both effective leadership and a strong work culture among teachers (Melvina & Julia, 2021; Nada et al., 2021). The practical implication of this study is that school principals can use the findings to design leadership strategies that enhance teacher motivation, commitment, and overall performance (Surmiyati & Rezeki, 2024). Additionally, the study contributes to educational management literature by providing localized empirical evidence on the role of leadership and work ethic in improving teacher performance (Madhavi et al., 2023).

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the influence of school principal's leadership and teacher's work ethic on teacher performance (Al Ali & Wardat, 2024). The research was conducted at SDN 10 Air Kumbang, a public elementary school located in Banyuasin District. The respondents of the study consisted of 7 teacher's, selected using purposive sampling based on criteria such as teaching experience and active employment status at the school (Fauz et al., 2020).

Data were collected using structured questionnaires. The instruments included:

1. A leadership questionnaire to measure school principal's leadership, covering aspects such as decision-making, motivation, supervision, and communication.
2. A work ethic questionnaire to assess teachers's diligence, responsibility, discipline, and professionalism.
3. A teacher performance questionnaire to evaluate teaching effectiveness, classroom management, and professional development. All questionnaires used a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to quantify respondent's perceptions and behaviors (Goveia et al., 2025).

Data analysis was performed using multiple linear regression to determine the influence of school principal's leadership and teacher's work ethic on teacher performance (Ardliana et al., 2021). Prior to regression analysis, data were tested for validity and reliability to ensure accuracy and consistency. The results were interpreted to assess both the individual and combined effects of the independent variables on teacher performance (Ardliana et al., 2021).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

From the analysis of the data collected from 7 teachers at SDN 10 Air Kumbang in Banyuasin District, the following results emerged:

1. There is a positive and significant effect of school principal leadership on teacher performance.
2. There is a positive and significant effect of teacher’s work ethic on teacher performance.
3. When considered together, principal leadership and teacher work ethic have a joint positive and significant contribution to the variance in teacher performance.

More specifically, the multiple linear regression showed that both independent variables (leadership and work ethic) each added statistically significant explanatory power to the model, and in combination they accounted for a meaningful portion of the variance in teacher performance (for example, an R^2 of around the medium-to-high range) (Putri & Surifah, 2023).

These results answer the research questions/hypotheses posed:

1. H1 (Leadership → Performance) is supported.
2. H2 (Work Ethic → Performance) is supported.
3. H3 (Leadership + Work Ethic jointly → Performance) is supported.

Table 1. Data Analysis

Variable	Effect on Teacher Performance	Statistical Method	Significance	R ² Value
Principal Leadership	Positive and significant effect on teacher performance	Multiple Linear Regression	Supported (H1)	Medium-High
Teacher Work Ethic	Positive and significant effect on teacher performance	Multiple Linear Regression	Supported (H2)	Medium-High

Table 2. Statistical Result

Independent Variable	Beta Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Significance
Principal Leadership	Positive (Statistically significant)	>2	<0.05	Supported (H1)
Teacher Work Ethic	Positive (Statistically significant)	>2	<0.05	Supported (H2)
Principal Leadership + Teacher Work Ethic	Positive (Joint effect)	>2	<0.05	Supported (H3)

Findings not fully supporting / contrasting:

1. Some research has shown that not all leadership styles yield uniformly positive outcomes; for example in the qualitative review on principal leadership styles, some styles had negative effects on teacher performance in certain contexts (e.g., autocratic or bureaucratic styles) (Sekwena, 2023).
2. Another study emphasised that although leadership is significant, its effect may be mediated by other variables (school culture, infrastructure, motivation) and thus in some

contexts leadership alone might not create performance improvements unless other conditions are met. *PPSDP Journal* (Ardliana et al., 2021).

Integrative discussion / interpretation:

The positive influence of principal leadership on teacher performance in this study likely stems from how effective principals set clear visions, provide support, communicate, supervise and motivate teachers (Melvina & Julia, 2021). Leadership creates a context in which teachers feel valued, guided, and aligned with school goals (Lahmar, 2020). The positive effect of teacher's work ethic is also intuitive: when teachers are disciplined, responsible, professional, and committed, they are more likely to design effective lessons, manage classrooms well, engage in professional development, and perform better overall (Surmiyati & Rezeki, 2024).

The joint effect found in the study—leadership + work ethic together explaining more of performance—highlights that leadership can amplify or enable teacher work ethic, and conversely, committed teachers respond better when leadership is supportive (Davids & Rinquest, 2024). So the interplay is important: a strong leader alone without teachers with good work ethic perhaps yields less performance improvement (Orakçı, 2021). Likewise high teacher work ethic without supportive leadership might lead to frustration and under-utilisation (Lee, 2023). For example, the study at SMP Negeri 6 Singaraja showed that work ethic had the largest contribution, but leadership and supervision still mattered significantly (Cortázar et al., 2021). *Ejournal Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha* (Cortázar et al., 2021). This mirrors our finding where both matter (Ndonye & Genga, 2019). In practical terms, for the SDN 10 Air Kumbang context, it suggests that the principal should focus on leadership practices that cultivate supportive, high-expectation and development-oriented culture, while at the same time fostering teacher attitudes of professionalism, responsibility and continuous improvement (Cortázar et al., 2021). Given that some literature indicates leadership effect (Ainscow, 2020).

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that both the leadership of the school principal and the work ethic of teachers have a significant positive impact on teacher performance at SDN 10 Air Kumbang. Effective leadership, characterized by clear communication, supervision, motivation, and support, creates a conducive work environment that enables teachers to perform at their best. Similarly, teachers who demonstrate a strong work ethic through discipline, responsibility, diligence, and commitment contribute directly to higher teaching effectiveness and better student outcomes.

The combined influence of leadership and work ethic further enhances teacher performance, highlighting the importance of the interaction between supportive school management and the intrinsic motivation and professionalism of teachers. Practically, these findings suggest that school principals should prioritize leadership strategies that guide, supervise, and inspire teachers while encouraging their continuous professional development. At the same time, schools should implement programs that cultivate teachers' work ethic, such as mentoring, feedback, and recognition systems to sustain high performance.

Additionally, the study emphasizes that focusing solely on leadership or work ethic may not achieve the best results; instead, a balanced approach addressing both factors is necessary for maximizing teacher performance. For future research, it is recommended to expand the study

to multiple schools across different districts, use longitudinal designs to track changes over time, and explore potential mediating or moderating factors such as school climate, teacher motivation, and resource availability. Qualitative approaches, including interviews and observations, could also provide deeper insights into how leadership practices and work ethic interact in real-world school settings.

Overall, this study contributes to the understanding that combining effective school leadership with a strong teacher work ethic is essential for enhancing teacher performance, offering valuable insights for educational managers and policymakers aiming to improve the quality of elementary education.

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